

## REPORT OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

We hereby submit to the Board of Selectmen and the citizens of Alton, the Report of the Budget Committee of the Town of Alton.

The Budget Committee has the responsibility as overseers of the Town's operational expenses and capital investments. Our responsibility, our mandate, is to act as the Town's advocate to ask questions, listen to defenses of extraordinary line items, and review total departmental requests. The process is both labor intensive and extensive, yet, highly gratifying and rewarding.

The Budget Committee meets once a month during April to October with August off to review the Town's monthly expenditures and validate that the money is being spent as requested, all transfers of monies are in order, and to recognize anomalies to share with the Town Administrator.

Beginning in late October we meet with each Department Head and the Town Administrator to go over the next year's budget request on a line-by-line basis. We assume a zero-cost-budgetary focus as we ask questions and suggest alternative insights on areas such as cost savings, more efficient management practices, and suggested changes in current accounting practices. What we do not do is micro-manage the Department Head or the Town's budget. We are charged to ask those questions and make those suggestions that you the citizen would make if you had the time to take part in this very time-consuming process.

Once the Department Head is informed of our decision changes, those items remain open for discussion with the Department Head, Town Administrator, and Board of Selectmen until our final vote on the budget in January at our public hearing. It should also be noted that our meetings are public and citizen input is always encouraged and welcome. The same process takes place as we decide on any financial changes from submitted Warrant Articles.

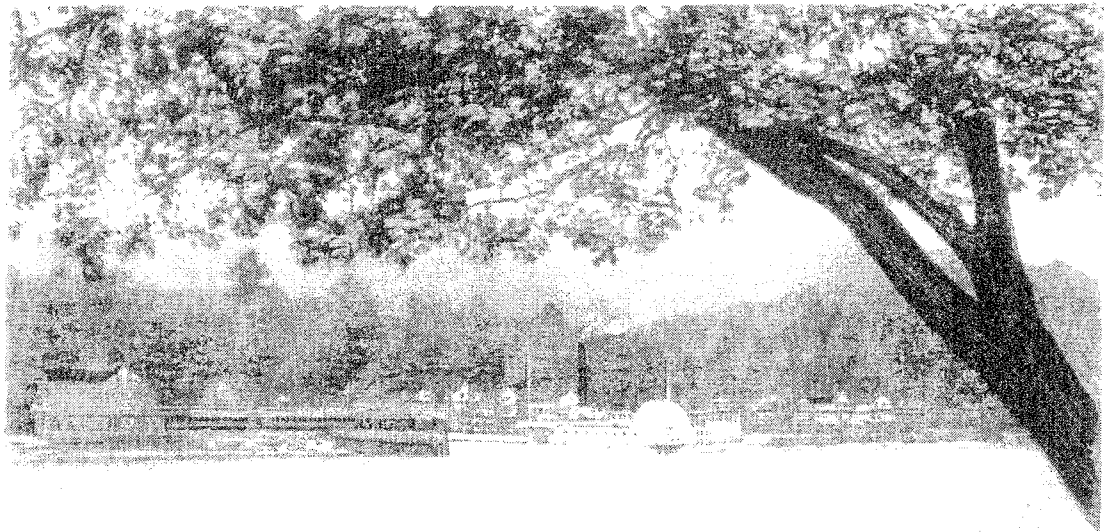
Your Town Budget Committee replicates this process a second time while reviewing and amending the Alton School District budget. Three members, Laurie Boyce, Virgil MacDonald, and I comprise three on the six seats on the Joint Maintenance Agreement (JMA) Budget Committee with three members from Barnstead. This Committee acts as more of an "advisory committee" without the statutory authority to affect change until added to the Alton School District proposed budget.

The Alton Budget Committee is recommending a Town Budget of \$5,665,391.00, which represents a reduction from the Board of Selectmen's Budget of \$4,607. Reductions were recommended from Executive, Government Buildings, Fire, Emergency Management, Highway and Streets, and Parks and Recreation. Increases were recommended for Election, Planning and Zoning, Police, Water Services, and Library. This year's budget as recommended is an increase of \$348,196 or 6.6%. The Default Budget will be presented at \$5,574,053.

The Alton Budget Committee and the School Board have agreed on a budget of \$11,880,686. This represents an increase of \$839,874 or 7.61 %.

My sincere thank you to Laurie Boyce, Bill Curtin, Virgil MacDonald, Elizabeth Dominick, Stephen McMahon, and Terri Noyes for their time, their dedication, and their personal commitment to a fiscally-responsible Alton town budget.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Steve Miller



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